

dren's children's children. The government likewise has set up national parks, land reserves, pollution regulations, and created protection for endangered species. A third standard demanded by the people involves that of education. Our government provides public schooling for every child in this country, so that they may grow up with the means to make bright futures for themselves.

Another area in which the American public and their administration have used strong ideals lies in the economy. We have always fiercely believed in a free enterprise system. The incentives of owning a private business and making profit instigated millions of citizens to work hard and develop the country. In doing so, the United States started growing as a capitalist giant through mining, farming, trade, industry, entertainment, and building, to name a few. The money brought in, new inventions, and immigrants eager to try their own hand in business never let the country look back.

The government did uphold and expand on such values, but it was the American voices behind them who presented these ideals and their own customary, unwritten morals. As already shown in the example on free enterprise, U.S. citizens have been zealous believers of hard work since the country's formation. The Founding Fathers set up a government and turned a loose group of states into a nation. Pioneers opened up the West. Immigrants introduced their ideas and joined the fight to advance America. Oil was found, railroads were connected, the Wright brothers flew the first airplane, women won the right to vote, America met victories in both World Wars, Dr. Jonas Salk found the polio vaccine, man landed on the moon, computers were invented, and we continue to speed down the Information Superhighway to new prospects on the horizon. The determination and devoted labor of all Americans has proved quite possible to be our greatest strength.

Besides working hard, the policy of helping others has long been a value which has made America great. Whether it be a neighbor in trouble like Mexico, a devastating earthquake in southern California, or the atrocious Oklahoma City bombing, Americans have come to the rescue. The Red Cross, 911 Emergency Medical Services, police departments, fire stations, and a multitude of other volunteer organizations come forth in times of need. We care about our brothers and sisters. U.S. citizens give money, volunteer time and talent, spread hope, and even donate their own blood and organs for each other. In a country where Good Samaritans live, good things are bound to happen.

Thus, by supporting the ethics of the Constitution and the values of hard work and love, the American people and their government have made our country the international force it is today. We value our freedoms and friends as much as hard work and free enterprise. We value education, the environment, and a peaceful world. We value all of these because we value the future of America. As the 21st century arrives, we shall accomplish new feats and set new goals and continue to make our great country even better.

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT OF 1996

SPEECH OF

HON. HELEN CHENOWETH

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 10, 1996

Mrs. CHENOWETH. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H.R. 3268, the IDEA Improvement Act of 1996. I have kept very close watch on this very important legislation because my personal concerns and the concerns of the countless Idahoans who have contacted me with their deep interest in the need for IDEA. I am very pleased to see that the bill before us reflects a balanced approach that I am proud to support. The legislation gives proper consideration to both the needs of the individual children and the needs of public schools that educate our children.

This bill takes major steps to improve IDEA. It provides new flexibility to parents. Parents will now have a well defined roll in the placement team as well as the learning plan team. This enhancement of the parents' roll gives them better access to school records and offers mediation services to resolve disputes before court costs begin running up.

Another important step this bill takes is the assistance it provides to school principals with additional flexibility to the schools. This legislation provides for increased local funding, simplified accounting, and fewer paperwork and procedural requirements. Most importantly this legislation creates safer schools for all students, disabled and non-disabled, and for teachers. This is accomplished by expanding opportunities for teacher training, ensuring the inclusion of appropriate supportive aids and services in the child's educational program; and enabling principals to quickly remove violent students and those who bring weapons or drugs to school from their current classrooms.

Don't take my word for it, listen to the comments I have received from the following groups.

The American Federation of Teachers wrote me:

The teachers are put in the best possible position to meet the needs of their students.

Idaho School Boards Association President-Elect, Vern Newby, wrote:

The re-authorization, as proposed, is a step in the right direction. The primary consideration is that local School Boards do what is best for all the kids.

Idaho Parents Unlimited Executive Director, Debra Johnson wrote:

We support H.R. 3268 and we appreciate your support of it as well. From the very beginning we have both agreed that maintaining a strong federal law that guarantees supports for students with disabilities is not only in Idaho's interest, it is in the nations best interest.

This legislation truly addresses the concerns that I have communicated to the Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee, and for that all of the committee members have my heartfelt thanks. I would especially like to thank Chairman GOODLING and Chairman CUNNINGHAM for their very good, hard work that made for a strong bill that I am proud to support.

I urge all of my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to join me in support for this great-

ly needed reform and re-authorization of IDEA. By voting "yes" we ensure that all children will have proper opportunities to excel in a stable learning environment.

REFORMING GOVERNMENT

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 12, 1996

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, June 12, 1996, into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

MAKING GOVERNMENT WORK FOR HOOSIERS

Hoosiers often tell me how they feel shut out from the political process. They say that Washington does not listen to them, and is more responsive to special interests than to their own concerns. Many have concluded that government either makes things worse or is incapable of making them better.

It has always been true that people in this country have been skeptical of power, and our system of government, with its checks and balances, reflects that view. Our citizens have long cherished the right to strongly criticize their leaders, and that attitude can be a healthy one.

But public cynicism today is severe, intense, and stronger than it once was. A top priority for elected officials must be to restore confidence in government. People want to see that the government is on their side, working to help not hurt them.

A key element of any reform program must be to make government more responsive to the needs and concerns of its citizens. That means opening up the political process, reducing the role of special interests, and making elected officials more accountable. Congress, with my support, has taken steps to these ends, but more needs to be done.

MAKING VOTING EASIER

Congress, with my support, approved a law in 1993 to ease voter registration procedures, and the results have been encouraging. Since the law went into effect in 1995, almost 10 million more Americans registered to vote, including about 500,000 Hoosiers.

BANNING GIFTS

The House, with my support, passed a bill last year to ban all gifts to Members, with limited exceptions for close family and friends. There is simply no reason to take valuable gifts, meals or vacations from lobbyists.

STRENGTHENING LOBBYING RESTRICTIONS

I voted for a tough lobbying reform law last year that requires paid lobbyists to disclose who pays them, whom they lobby, what issues they lobby for, and how much they are paid to influence the government. This should help make the system more open and accountable.

APPLYING WORKPLACE LAWS TO CONGRESS

Last January Congress passed a law to apply private sector laws to Congress. This law was based on a recommendation of the Joint Committee on the Organization of Congress, which I co-chaired. The legislation applies key workplace laws to Congress, including overtime, workplace safety and anti-discrimination rules.

REFORMING CAMPAIGN FINANCE LAWS

The House leadership has pledged to take up campaign finance reform this July. I regret it has taken the leadership so long to bring this priority item to the floor. My view is that genuine reform must include the following elements.